



ART: D. RUNA T.



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Dear friends,

The summer heat continues. I hope and pray that you are able to find time to stay cool. If not, I hope you're able to find your voice to demand climate control in your cells, dorm, and/or day room. Your bodies deserve to be taken care of, and air conditioning or good fans are part of that.

July has been an incredible moment for prison justice in the United States. As we reported last month, prisoners in California led a hunger strike demanding that changes get made [see Page 7 for details]. As of July 25th the majority of the hunger strikers have ended their strike as they came to a compromise with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. According to the prison hunger strike solidarity group, "The leaders confirmed CDCR's announcement that immediate changes in SHU policy are the opportunity for some educational programs, provision of all-weather caps (beanies) and wall calendars. More substantially, the leaders explained the CDCR has agreed to investigate changes to other policies including the gang validation and debriefing processes, and it is now up to supporters outside prison to make sure the CDCR upholds their promise.

"Many supporters, as well as the Pelican Bay hunger strike leaders, see this as a victory. The leaders explained to the mediation team they are overwhelmed by the support and solidarity of family members, community members, organizations, and people across the world joining their fight for human rights, and cannot adequately express their appreciation. They also explained this is in no way over. Using a sports reference, the Short Corridor Collective insisted: "this is just the first quarter," and what a start it has been."

The organizing and actions of the prisoners in California needs to function as a reminder that prisoners have the capacity to organize for power. The prisoners in Georgia mobilized in strong and radical ways nearly a year ago. There is a tide changing from coast to coast. As Black and Pink, we need to get our voices involved and help shape this movement of prisoner power. As currently incarcerated people are organizing and strengthening their voices, formerly incarcerated and convicted people (FICPM) are also gaining momentum. There is a movement building on this side of the walls as well. In November people will gather in Los Angeles, and voices of LGBTQ people need to be at the table. The mission statement of the FICPM states "By coming together as one with a national platform, we will aid legislative, litigation, and advocacy struggles, generating the power of mass protest towards the systemic process of oppression. We will organize, educate, and mobilize in a structure that is broad enough to embrace the various motivations, skills, and tactics of those who take up the banner of this Movement." We too are part of this movement! Your visions and your struggles can help shape this platform. The Leadership Circle, as it comes together, will help bring our voices forward.

This summer I have had the chance to visit some folks who recently got out from behind prison walls. Both are living in the Midwest. Both have ridiculous parole obligations. Both are men who have strong hearts and the ability to stay on this side of the fence. What is magical about these two men is that they have a strong support system for them as they have gotten out. We all know that such a benefit is not the reality for many people, especially LGBTQ folks when they get out. One of the resources Black and Pink may need to develop, and will need your help to do so, is a list of support systems for LGBTQ formerly incarcerated people. It will take your knowledge, as well as ours, to make this information available to the most number of people. Our visions need to be large and our hope in the possibility of transformation must keep us going.

As the summer continues keep remembering that once there were no prisons, that day will come again.

Love and struggle! Jason

"3 Snaps, 2 Air Kisses and a Heeeeeeyyyy!"

Dear Black & Pink Family,

I am so happy to have received my 2nd newsletter! Yeah! "3 Snaps, 2 Air Kisses and a Heeeeeeyyyy!" As I am a fish to Black & Pink I hope that I can be accepted into the Black & Pink family. Cuz I have very little of my own now since I have come out to my family in 2010. But regardless, I have been happy to finally find something I can truly relate to in Black & Pink! I have only received my first two newsletters, but I feel as if I've found my real family who have helped me my entire life. I have a renewed strength and courage because of everyone at Black & Pink and especially those who are incarcerated like Jimi, Daryl, Mikee, Miss Shaylanna, Miss Marissa. But I want to really say to Jonathan that I keep him in my prayers & please get stronger! I support your efforts and am also in the same struggles as you! Don't give up! Never give up! Be true to yourself. You are not alone! And I have to also say to my girl, Faythlynn Ginnifer Roberts (cuz I am a fellow Michigan prisoner) girl you have a friend in me! I too was dealing with a similar, yet different situation while at E.C.F. But it wasn't the inmates I had to watch out for it was E.C.F. staff! (Sinnamyn was just there but rode out). Though you and I have not yet met, you have a friend in me 4 life! I know I have dealt with the same struggle! We all support you and love you! I will continue to aid anyone in our struggle as GLBTQs. Well as much as I would love to keep talking (more like rambling) I will end this! I love every one of you who are in the Black & Pink family! I hope and pray that I can finally say "I'm home with family!" Well until next time I must return to falling in love with a close friend (Ms Jessica) who I feel doesn't feel the same, but maybe I'm wrong! (Crossing fingers) But I'll tell you about that next time!!!

With truly all my love, respect and support, Hugs and kisses always,
Scott "Jayme Lynn," Michigan

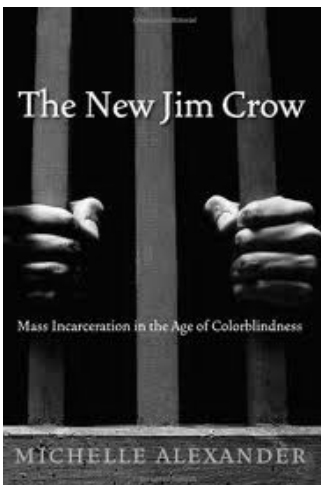


Real issues that universally affect us

Greetings to my Black & Pink Family,

I am a 35 year old Black male originally from Chicago. I've been serving this life without parole sentence for the past 17 years. I committed a senseless homicide back when I was 18. A crime I truly regret and am remorseful about.

The purpose of this letter is manifold. First and foremost, I want to commend B&P for being the message they bring. Their actions back up their rhetoric. They care and have created a forum for those of us who'd usually not have a voice. As a queer it is a challenge to be heard or taken seriously. So I applaud B&P's efforts. Also, the many prisoner submissions have also enriched my life in a plethora of ways. Creative writing and artistic expression can be both cathartic as well as therapy.



I also wanted to commend B&P for their efforts towards elevating the discussions surrounding us and our community. It's not all about penis, anus, vagina, etc. Sex is a part of the picture, but it is far from the totality of the picture. We are people who are dynamic and we have ideas, ideals, values, principles, morals, standards, and beliefs. The LGBTQ community is not a monolith. However, there are real issues that universally affect us. Chief among them- the prison industrial complex- or as I like to say, "cells for sell." The destruction of this business is something I welcome and will do all that I can to help bring about. By the way, I recommend you go to amazon.com (or have someone else do it) and order *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander. [ISBN-10: 9781595581037] Trust me, it will blow your minds!!

Finally, I want to say this. Be true to yourselves. It may take courage you think you don't have- But trust me, you do!! There's no greater agony in life when one cannot accept nor embrace their truest self. There's nothing wrong with you!! You are exactly as you were meant to be. A masterpiece of flawed perfection. Just like everybody else. No one would choose to live a life that so many people loathe or say they hate. We can't help it.

We are who we are. Take care and know that I sincerely love you all.

-Patrice D., Illinois

Welcome to My Nightmare



Welcome to my nightmare,
Where all faces lack emotion
And bodies move in slow motion,
Where the spirit lacks a soul,
And empty feelings feed on each other,
Like vultures...

Welcome to my nightmare,
Where your name is just a number,
And your number is your plot,
Where your honor, and respect are all you got,
Which was sentenced with you to rot...

Welcome to my nightmare,
Where for some razorblade meets the wrist,
And a bedsheet made as a rope,
With a loop and knot to fit their neck,
All in the name of loneliness and misery...

Welcome to my nightmare,
Where anything goes,
There is no we or us,
And you can't misplace your trust...

Welcome to my nightmare,
Where family relations
Seem like a distant memory,
Like strangers who don't seem to care,
The thoughts and reality are both scary as hell,
Nonetheless,
Welcome to my nightmare

-Melvin L. M.

Just As I Am

Come and take my hand and walk with me
Let "our" love take over and speak softly
Accept me for the way I am and love me for me
Do not judge me
For beauty is as deep as the skin
Where the true beauty lies deep within
Within my heart and my soul
Lies a desire for love that won't turn cold or grow old
For in life one must find
That true love lies within the heart and is loving and kind
And grows strong through the sands of time
Where outer beauty fades as time grows dark
So love me just as I am and will be
And you will feel love so beautiful and throughout eternity

Dedicated to: the GLBTQ Community

By Greg B, Missouri



Art: David F.

The struggle for trans healthcare in prison

Hello,

My name is Anastasia L. Seger. I am a male-2-female (m-2-f) pre-op transsexual. I am also an inmate. In some respects I am lucky. I have not had to worry too much about sexual harassment from the guards or the inmates. And Yes. I do present myself as a female as much as I can. And I use my female name. I legally changed my name to Anastasia in 2000.

I have had some verbal harassment from the security guards and from inmates, but it has not been so bad as to cause me more than mental distress. It has mainly amounted to name calling and having people that talk to me questioned as to WHY they are talking to me. I believe that the people that tried to be friends with me have been harassed more than I have. This was done at another unit that has all white guards and in a rural area. Most of the guards are from that area and most of them have rarely if ever been anywhere else. Now I am at a unit that is a lot better as to the security and inmates. I am not harassed at all here. So that is why I feel that I am lucky.

Now as to treatment? I am unlucky. I have been trying to get treatment for over a year. Here is a little bit of history for you. In 2006 I was diagnosed as suffering from Gender Identity Disorder (GID). I tried for over 17 months to get some form of treatment. I was told everything from "You do not have a diagnosis for GID," to "Your current licensed provider has not diagnosed you as suffering from GID." I wrote letters to everyone that I could think of. From the mental health counselors to the psychiatrist. From the director of the entire Department of Correction to the head mental health administrator. I kept copies of all the letters and requests. I also filed numerous grievances and followed them all the way to the final step.

In September of 2007 I was finally allowed to see a specialist. He gave me a diagnosis of GID transsexual type. I took one-on-one counseling with him until March of 2009. Then he turned over my main sessions to a psychologist because of logistical reasons. But he was to be consulted on matters concerning my GID. In September of 2009 he ended his employment with the department. Since I last spoke with him in March of 2009 I have received no meaningful treatment for GID. I have steadily campaigned for treatment. I even filed a civil suit called a 1983. It was summarily dismissed as frivolous. The American Civil Liberties Union Gay, Lesbian, Bi-Sexual, Transgender and AIDS Project section came in to represent me on the appeal. My case was still dismissed.

Before I started my campaign for treatment in 2006, the department had no policy for dealing with inmates that were trans gendered. If a person came into the department taking hormone therapy, that person was NOT allowed to continue it. Nothing was done for us trans gendered inmates. But since then a policy has been written. It allows persons that were taking hormones before their arrest to continue taking them in prison if they have documentation, unless the doctor believes for some reason that they should not continue them for health reasons.

But anyone that was not taking them or cannot prove that they were taking them will not be allowed to start them no matter what. I was taking "Black Market" (birth control) before my arrest so I am not allowed to take them now. The policy allows people to get psychotherapy as a form of treatment for their GID if they were not on hormones previously. But that is the only form of treatment available to those of us that were diagnosed in prison or not prescribed hormones through a licensed physician before their arrest.

I am now trying to get the policy changed. The courts have ruled that a policy should not be used to deny an inmate a form of treatment so I am using that as the basis of my arguments. I am not a lawyer nor do I have a lot of experience in legal matters. What I know is what I have learned during my trials trying to get treatment for myself.

The best advice I can give is to write letters to anyone in your department of corrections that you feel might have a say in your treatment. The director or commissioner, the deputy director or deputy commissioners, mental health officials at your unit and their supervisors. If there is one person over all of the mental health or health divisions in your department of corrections then write that person. **Be sure to keep copies of all the letters and other correspondence you send, even if you have to use carbon paper or have to write it all out by hand. If you write it out by hand make sure that the copy you keep is worded exactly like the one you send.**



Cont. struggle for trans healthcare

After you have written letters and you have not gotten a meaningful response then you need to file a grievance or formal complaint. **You need to be sure to follow all the steps involved including the appeal stage if you are thinking about filing a civil suit (1983).** The Prison Litigation Reform Act (PLRA) requires you to file a grievance and follow it through all the way through to the final phase or your suit could be dismissed.

Keep up the good fight.

Sincerely,

Anastasia L. S. T., AR

Editor's Note: Anastasia has put together some great resources and wisdom we hope to include in a future Newsletter.

Revolt-ment

To The Black & Pink Family of the World,
May Peace, Blessings and Power Be Upon Us All:

This piece was inspired by "Love and Wisdom from Versace" in the Jan. 2011 issue. She got me to thinking of a way to get others in society to join the Freedom of All Prisoners Fight. It's my theory that if more of us start pointing out/showing how Correctional Institutions affect taxpayers, communities, schools, etc., financially, emotionally, and physically, more of the mass will wake up and re-direct their thinking, or at the least, start to really question the judicial system.

As I write (more to myself than to any reader), I have an amount of "Revolt-ment" for a government system that is said to been built to stand for it's public people, but if you don't make \$40,000 a year or more, you are not part of the public for in which it stand.

Just a small amount of dis-like I have for "legalized slavery" under the code name of "Correctional Rehabilitation." More than 60% of the people that the "Dept. of Corr." (so-called) have Rehabilitated come right back (why?!?). More than 50% of the more than 60% that return to Correctional Institution'z are back for "property crime," "V.O.P.," and "Drug charge." Most of them re-enter society with no money, no support, and no home, facing these problem'z upon release, odd'z are against an ex-con to staying out in society.

Upon my last release, I myself was released homeless. In the High Tide of a "Recession," more than 2 million people lost their jobs during the Recession. (I was one of them). It took me moving to a state I never been to before with only \$15 in my name, and living in shelter home'z for 6 ½ months to finally get a job at a fast food restaurant (Hay! it's work), only to be 1 of 7 people to get cut after 3 months. I didn't have a job, couldn't find work, turned back to the street'z. I got 40 year'z for "robbery without a weapon" for \$1,300. How much money will people be paying the government to keep me housed for the next 37 years?



Cont. Revolt-ment

The problem is, that there is no problem (well, not where the Politician'z are concerned). Because there is no "Correctional Rehabilitation" when the prison institution and "Industrial Correction Corporation" are the primary or fundamental forms the government use.

There never will be any "correctional rehabilitation" as long as people see prisons as "Correctional Rehabilitation Centers" and not for what they really are- "Modernized Slavery Industrial Factories."

How eazily most of us forget what we learned in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade concerning American history. In the 16th, 17th, and 18th Century, what is now known as the good 'ole "USA" was in part used by the Brit's (and other part'z of Europe) as a "penal system" for their con'z, just like was done to New Zealand, Australia, and parts of the Brit's W.I.'s.

Convict'z served their time as slave'z, their work produced money, so did the demand for their imports to an undeveloped country. So why would a government, any government, outlaw something that would bring in income from productions that came at almost no cost?

It wouldn't. And when our government won their/it's independence from the Brit's/Europe, it never did away with slavery (Abolish, Destroy) as a whole. In fact, the "U.S. Amendment" that was said to end slavery actually enforced it.

The 13th Amendment made itself very clear that the penalty of Slavery could and will be enforced

upon any said person convicted of a crime/felony.

13th Amendment

Section 1: Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2: Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate

"Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, EXCEPT AS A PUNISHMENT FOR CRIME whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legisla-

tion." [Editor's note: the author's words were changed here to the exact wording of the amendment, though their upper-case emphasis was kept.]

Keep in mind this Nation'z (No disrespect toward'z the Natives of this land- This is and will always be your land in my eye) Fore Founder'z always made the law to fit their own selfish needs. So in truth, "Correctional Rehabilitation" is only another sweet way to re-word and say "Millions of Dollars Slave Industry." This is only my thought'z, but the subject is a Blue Print that we give to others.

With that I will go as I came, "In Peace, Always Peace."

LaFrederick AKA One-Deep, Florida

Editor's note: This is only one edited section of LaFrederick's great writings, sorry we don't have the space to include it all...



Widening our circles of compassion

"A human being is part of a whole, called by us the Universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circles of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty." Quote by Albert Einstein
Submitted by Savannah in Florida



Pelican Bay State Prison Hunger Strike

"Prisoners in the Security Housing Unit (SHU) at Pelican Bay State Prison (California) began an indefinite hunger strike on July 1, 2011 to protest the cruel and inhumane conditions of their imprisonment. The hunger strike was organized by prisoners in an unusual show of racial unity." The strike is now over.

The hunger strikers developed five core demands. Briefly they are:

1. Eliminate group punishments.

Instead, practice individual accountability. When an individual prisoner breaks a rule, the prison often punishes a whole group of prisoners of the same race. This policy has been applied to keep prisoners in the SHU indefinitely and to make conditions increasingly harsh.

2. Abolish the debriefing policy and modify active/inactive gang status criteria.

Prisoners are accused of being active or inactive participants of prison gangs using false or highly dubious evidence, and are then sent to longterm isolation (SHU). They can escape these tortuous conditions only if they "debrief," that is, provide information on gang activity. Debriefing produces false information (wrongly landing other prisoners in SHU, in an endless cycle) and can endanger the lives of debriefing prisoners and their families.

3. Comply with the recommendations of the US Commission on Safety and Abuse in Prisons (2006) regarding an end to longterm solitary confinement. T

his bipartisan commission specifically recommended to "make segregation a last resort" and "end conditions of isolation." Yet as of May 18, 2011, California kept 3,259 prisoners in SHUs and hundreds more in Administrative Segregation waiting for a SHU cell to open up. *Some prisoners have been kept in isolation for more than thirty years.*

4. Provide adequate food.

Prisoners report unsanitary conditions and small quantities of food that do not conform to prison regulations. There is no accountability or independent quality control of meals.

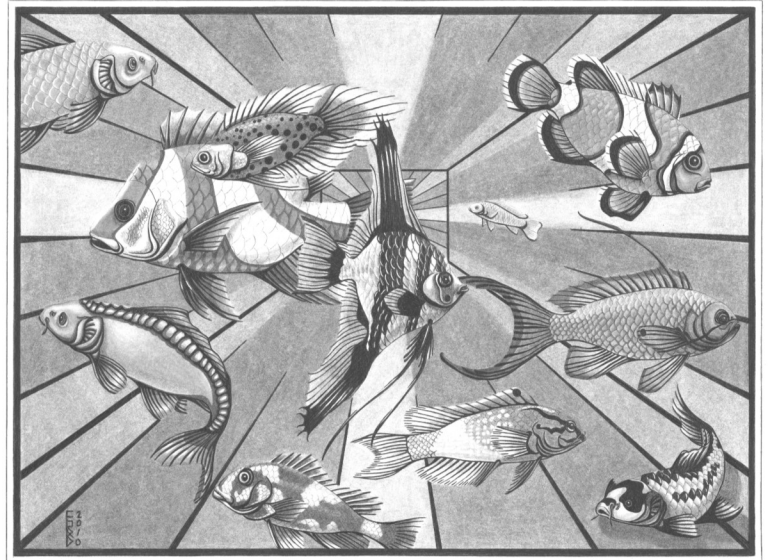
5. Expand and provide constructive programs and privileges for indefinite SHU inmates.

The hunger strikers are pressing for opportunities "to engage in self-help treatment, education, religious and other productive activities..." Currently these opportunities are routinely denied, even if the prisoners want to pay for correspondence courses themselves. Examples of privileges the prisoners want are: one phone call per week, and permission to have sweatsuits and watch caps. (Often warm clothing is denied, though the cells and exercise cage can be bitterly cold.) All of the privileges mentioned in the demands are already allowed at other SuperMax prisons (in the federal prison system and other states).

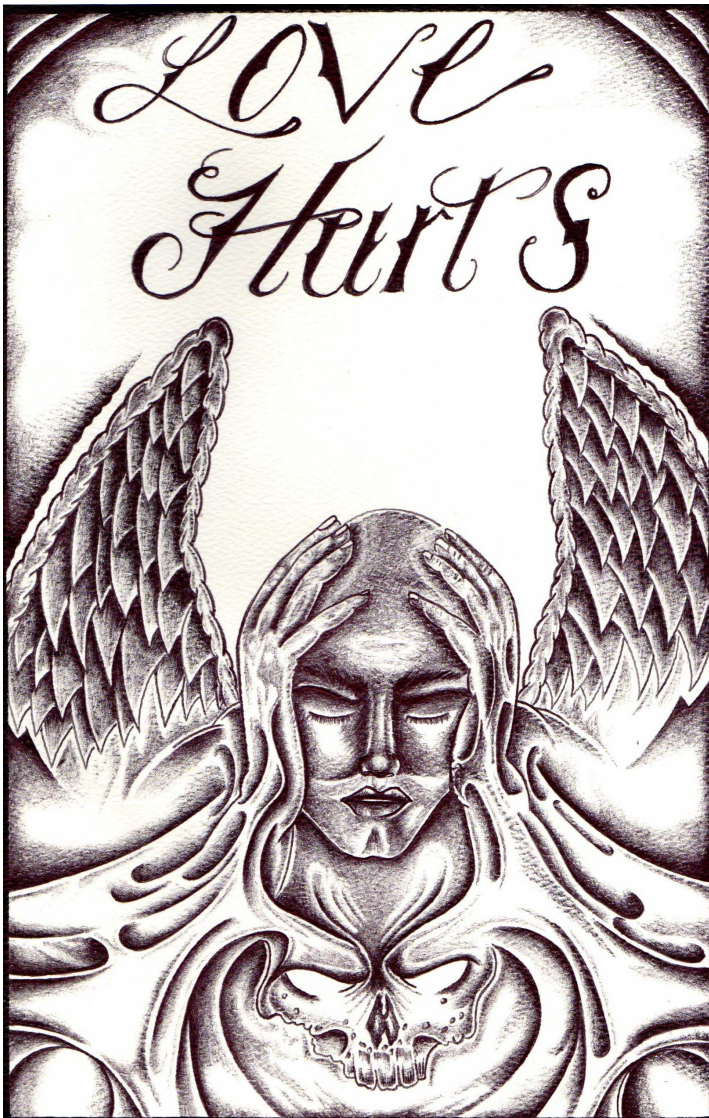




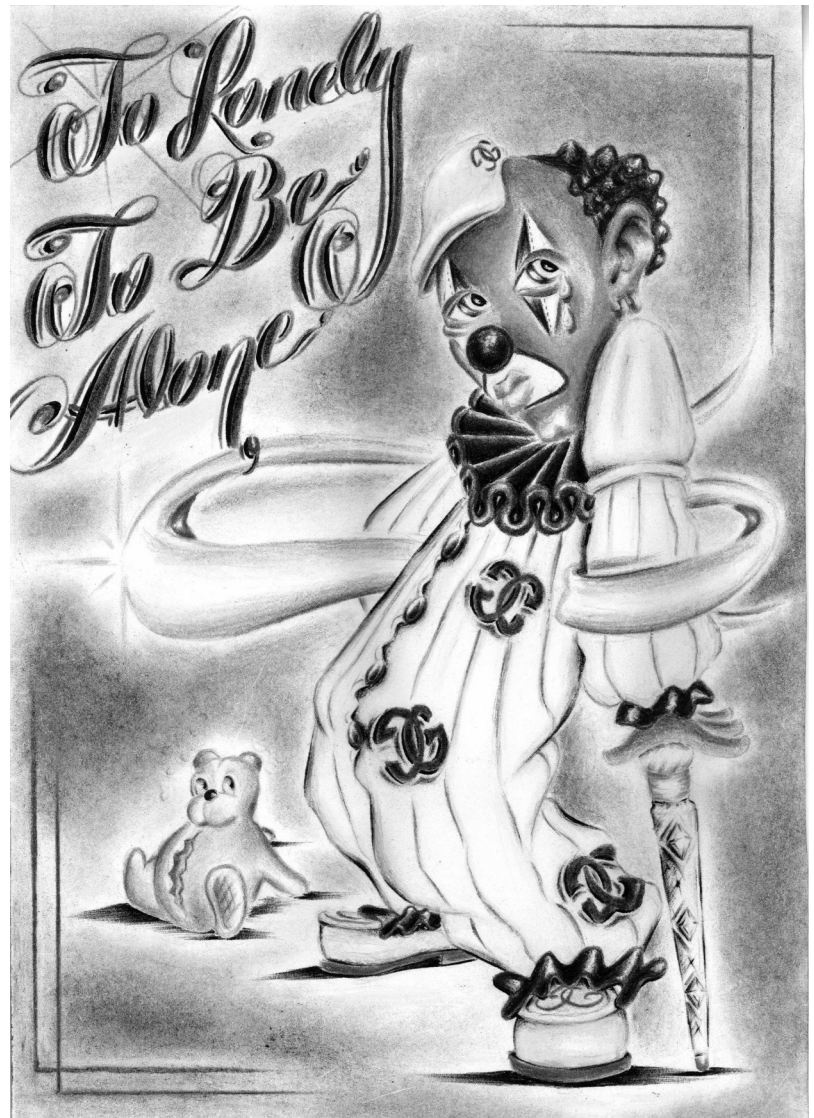
Art: Chris J.



Art: Hunter F.



Art: Mario M.



Art: Ray M.

Do you have a knack for numbers?
Want to try something new?
Try Sudoku!!

Instructions:
Fill in every box so that each 3 x 3 larger box contains all of the digits 1 through 9.
Also, each row (across) and column (down) has to have all of the digits 1 through 9!

Give it a good try, and when you think you've got it, check the answers on the back page!

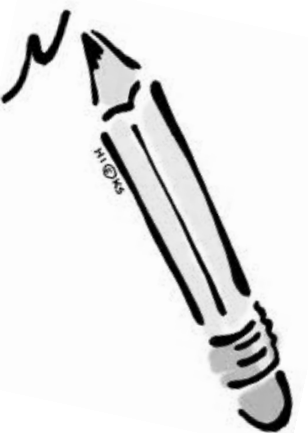
Sudoku!

Easy

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Good Luck!

Newsletter Subscriptions (start or stop)

Newsletter Submissions

Free "Outside" Pen-Pal Requests

Ideas for Black & Pink and
Statement of Purpose Feedback

Write to B&P!

Write to B&P Art!

***New Address as of January 2011! ***

Black and Pink– Newsletter Subscriptions

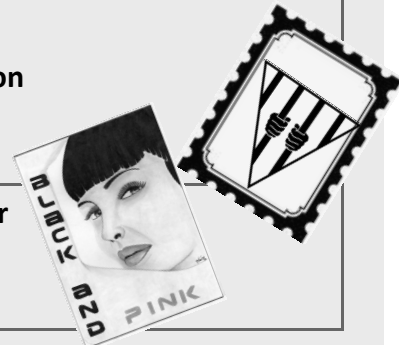
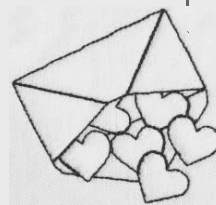
Black and Pink– Newsletter Submissions

Black and Pink– Pen Pal

Black and Pink– Developing Leadership

c/o Community Church of Boston
565 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02116

Black & Pink Art c/o Reed Miller
200 Amory Street
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130



LEGAL: Consider writing to Lambda Legal for support or referrals with legal issues that you are having. "Lambda Legal is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and those with HIV through impact litigation, education and public policy work."

Lambda Legal, National Office 120 Wall Street, Suite 1500, New York, NY 10005, 212-809-8585

Another resource to turn to, if you can afford the subscription (\$24 yearly, payable with new stamps), is Prison Legal News. This resource was co-started by a former gay prisoner, Ed Mead, though now it is run by Paul Wright. You can reach them by writing to: **Prison Legal News, P.O. Box 2420, West Brattleboro, VT 05303**

SURVIVORS: Just Detention International provides support for prisoners who are survivors of sexual abuse.

Write them at the legal address below for a packet. Each packet includes an introductory letter, a list of local resources, fact sheets, publications about recovery from sexual abuse, and a letter of hope from another survivor.

Ms. Melissa Rothstein, Esq., 3325 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 340, Los Angeles, CA 90010

Leadership Circle

We're currently tallying up the ballots from the prisoner and "free-world" leadership circle votes! In the next issue of the newsletter, we'll let you know who your new leadership circle is!

Thank you to everyone who submitted an application to join, and to those who voted!

We're so excited to begin a process of making Black and Pink more accountable to our family in prison! Keep sending us your ideas:)



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Easy